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INPORT NEWS

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■ NHS

Investigation 'urgent'

ALLAN BENNER
 InPort News Staff

The new year has begun very much like 2009, says Mayor Vance Badewey, with "a great deal of concern" about hospital services in Niagara.

After spending the holidays researching problems with the delivery of hospital services in Niagara, the Port Colborne mayor said a provincial investigation into Niagara Health System is urgent.

See **NIAGARA HEALTH SYSTEM** | Page 19

See Inside: **PUPP'S INSERTS**
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■ **TRIBUNE TOURNAMENT:** Lakeshore's 49-42 victory over favoured E.L. Crossley

Gators capture consolation title

BERND FRANK
 InPort News Staff

WELLAND — For a "football school," Lakeshore Catholic isn't half bad when the ball is round.

Better make that, two halves. An all-out, four-quarter effort against favoured E.L. Crossley gave the Gators a 49-42 victory over the Cyclone and the consolation championship at the 55th Tribune Boys Basketball Tournament.

Rebounding from a lopsided loss to Notre Dame on the opening night of the four-day tournament with impressive wins against Jean Vanier and Centennial, Lakeshore came into Saturday night's B final at Esdaille confident an A game effort would be able to upset the defending consolation champion.

"I thought if we played like we did the past two days, we would have a good chance. Our guys were confident and they wanted to show that we are more than

just a football and a soccer school," head coach Corey Quinn said after the Gators improved their consolation championship record to 4-3.

By no means did the Gators swamp Crossley in the opening game of Saturday's championship doubleheader. Their 10-2 lead after one quarter was whittled down to 21-19 at the half and was a less-than-comfortable 34-27 entering the final frame.

"We allowed them to come back but, as opposed to previous teams, they didn't panic."

See **SPORTS** | Page 2

JOE CSEH InPort News Photo

Cyclone Cam Robins is surrounded by Gators Andrew Whitney, Hunter Tippett and Glen Stratton during Saturday night's consolation final. The Gators captured the title against the E.L. Crossley Cyclone with a 49-42 victory.



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upfront

■ **SPORTS:** Lakeshore Gators step up to the E.L. Crossley Cyclone

'This was our chance to shine'

FROM PAGE 1

Lakeshore used a slight height advantage to protect the inside and, for the most part, succeeded in keeping the ball out of the hands of Cyclone scoring threats Nigel Kurgan and Cam Robins, who were limited to 14 and two points, respectively.

"We know who they are, from playing travel ball, and we know who their top shooters are," said Teddy Stoner, who led the Gators in scoring with 16 points and was named the team's Niagara College Player of the Game. Making the point a home away from home on defence was all part of Lakeshore's game plan against the hard-pressing, fast-break Cyclone.

"They like to use the middle and we shut them out."

Stoner, who along with teammate Hunter Tippett was named to the second all-star team, said everyone on his team showed up to play because the stakes were so high.

"We haven't really done anything in basketball for the past five or six years, so this was our chance to shine," he said after the upset of a Cyclone team that was more experienced than the squad that took the consolation title last year.

"A lot of people stepped up, like Pags," Stoner said in singling out teammate Joe Pagliaro for praise.

Counted on as a strong rebounder, the 5-foot-11 guard/forward contributed eight points in the victory, all of them in the second half.

Like the Gators, the Cyclone were a confident crew dispatching Port High and the host Eastdale Eagles. They had been bounced to the B side of the bracket following a 53-43 loss to St. Francis in Wednesday's qualifying round.

They might have been too confident, according to Kurgan, Crossley's player of the game.

"We came into the game overconfident. We came in thinking this would be a sure thing, that we just didn't have to play," he said.

Kurgan said taking that attitude onto the court with them was the biggest mistake his team could have made against Lakeshore in the final.

"We're not that great a skilled team to be slacking like



KAESHA FORAND Staff Photo

Lakeshore's Teddy Stoner blocks Jean Vanier's Roc Strassbourg during second-round action in the Tribune Tournament.

that," he said.

Kurgan gave the Gators credit for the victory and for using their size to protect the basket.

"There were a lot of arms in the passing lane," Kurgan said after feeling a lot of them as he muscled his way inside and underneath for a layup.



JOE CSEH InPort News Photo

Crossley No. 5 Nigel Kurgan goes for the layup against Gator Joe Pagliaro during the consolation final.

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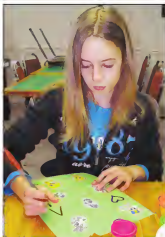
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portraits

After-school fun is on the menu



Above left: Tyson Macneil, Charlee Neff, Community Living staffer Samantha Biledeau, Max Baswick, program organizer Amanda Rhindress and Jacob Dottori take turns making chocolate pudding for "worms in dirt" — a dessert that combines crushed Oreo cookies, chocolate pudding and gummy worms — during the after-school program Health and Youth — Port Colborne's After School Approach.



Above right: Marissa Dottorio puts her artistic talent to work completing a craft.

KAESHA FORAND
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Children and young teens are learning to cook and live healthy lives through an after school program offered through Community Living.

They're also doing more socializing and participating in physical activity.

Health and Youth — Port Colborne's After School Approach is funded through the Ministry of Health Promotion and is providing youngsters between the ages of seven and 15 with a free after-school program. The eight-week program began this week for those who wish to participate.

Marissa Dottorio said the after-school program is "a good way to get out of the house and homework." The 12-year-old said she enjoys learning how to make soup, wraps and other recipes she can try at home, in addition to making new friends.

"My favourite part is cooking."

Danielle Rock is also an active participant in the program every Tuesday after school.

"I'm not allowed to cook at home so I cook here and I like making dessert," she said. "I like how we get to do crafts and try yoga. I'm learning new things when I'm here."

Program supervisor Amanda Rhindress said feedback has been very positive from children and parents. She said kids typically register for one or two nights a week.

"We teach kids to have a more balanced lifestyle and teach healthy living."

The sessions run from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. As many as 12 children can enjoy a healthy snack, do crafts, play games, prepare a healthy supper and take part in an activity such as yoga, kick boxing and dance.

Last week's Tuesday program menu consisted of a vegetable snack, sandwiches, salad and "worms in dirt" (chocolate pudding with candy) for dessert. As the program moves along, more challenging meals will be taught involving more prep work, ingredients and kitchen safety.

"Most of the kids really like to cook and they have responded pretty well to the physical activity," Rhindress said.

Before preparing food, participants wash their hands, put on an apron and hair net. They then follow recipes together. Eager cooks can take part in food preparation and perform different tasks associated with a dish — all while keeping kitchen safety in mind.

Parents who want to register their children can contact Rhindress at 905-246-8359. Children between the ages of seven to 12 can take part on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, youth between the ages of 13 and 15 can drop in on Wednesday.

The program is held at The Centre for Community Living on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, on Tuesday it is held at the Reach Out Centre and on Thursday at the co-operative office on Saturn Cres.



Above: Danielle Rock and Dottorio prepare sandwiches.

Left: Shylah Macneil plays croquinoles.

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ourview

Too many deaths on our roads

KALVIN REID
QMI Agency

A little more than a week before we rang in the new year, the Niagara Regional Police announced with cautious optimism that we had a better year in terms of road safety.

It was encouraging, but modest, news. At the time of the announcement, the police department reported a slight decrease in the number of traffic fatalities over the course of the year, down three from the 29 killed on Niagara's roads in 2008.

But then there was the tragic accident in Fort Erie just after Christmas that claimed the life of 18-year-old Reilly Anzovino. Then an 83-year-old woman was killed in a parking lot crash in Port Colborne on New Year's Eve.

That modest improvement isn't so modest anymore. The 28 people killed on roadways policed by the NRP in 2009 is a slight improvement, but in an area of particular concern in Niagara, any improvement is welcome. Niagara traffic fatalities hit a grisly high of 39 in 2002 and have been consistently sitting about 30 a year ever since.

It's been a particularly worrisome problem for the NRP which has stepped up its efforts to make Niagara's roads safer.

Increased enforcement and public education campaigns have been underway for a while now, and senior officers were hoping the 2009 statistics are a sign the measures are working.

However, one year does not make a trend.

What will be more telling is this statistic falling further in 2010 and beyond.

But most important to remember is this is not a problem for the police to solve alone. While every crash is unique, more often than not speed and/or alcohol are contributing factors in car wrecks causing death. Police can expend all the resources they want to catch speeders in radar traps or nail drunk drivers in RIDE programs — where NRP officers need the help of all of us in preventing a drunk person from climbing behind the wheel of a car, and to respect the rules of the road, and other drivers, while we are behind the wheel.

Plan a safe way home. If you know you are going to be drinking, put aside fare for a bus or cab. Or make arrangements with a designated driver. If you are hosting guests, ensure there are options like sleeping spaces or a taxi fund for them to use. If you have a friend or family member attempting to drive after drinking, stop them — take their keys away.

We are all responsible for the safety of our streets. Let's give the regional police a hand and do our part to drastically reduce the number of needless deaths on Niagara roadways.

■ A PURR-FECT GIFT



KAESHA FORAND Staff Photo

Grade 7 and 8 students at Ecole St. Joseph collected money for a local organization instead of having a gift exchange. They raised \$131 for the Welland and District Humane Society and the Grade 8 class stands behind Carl Weaver as he presents the funds to Ted Bettie, shelter manager.

■ readers'views

Community Christmas dinner thank you

The organizers of the Community Christmas Dinner would like to say a public thank you to all involved in this year's dinner.

As it happens every year, we were blessed with an abundance of supporters. We can not begin to think of running this event without all you supporters.

From the prep crew that arrives Christmas Eve afternoon to peel and slice piles of veggies, to the kitchen staff that comes early Christmas day to get in all cooking, to the servers, entertainers, and delivery drivers, thank you.

And a special thank you to Sandy. We could not run without you.

Because of all of you we were able to serve more than 250 meals. You people are great.

We would also like to acknowledge the local businesses who donated either food products or cash to buy

food:

J. Oakum Steel, Minor Fisheries, Dr. Parr and Dr. Seldon, the Friends Over 55 Seniors Centre, Humberstone Lions, The Young Automotive Professionals Club, Port Colborne General Hospital, Port Colborne High School, Port Taxi, Boggio Pharmacy, Tim Horton's, Re/Max, Canadian Tire, Pro Style Flooring, the Port Colborne Lioness Club, Meridian Credit Union, Bridgeway Motors, Judy's Bakery, Home Hardware, Food Basics, No Frills and the Country Store Kettle and Grill.

Many of these supporters have been with us for all 12 years. Please say "thank you" to them next time you see them.

And to all of Port Colborne, thank you and see you next Christmas

Jack O'Neil, Larry Olm and Mike Feagan

■ WORLD ISSUES

Not the 'Noughties'



Gwynne Dyer

Decades don't usually have the courtesy to begin and end on the right year.

The social and cultural revolution that Western countries think of when they talk of the '60s only got underway in 1962-63, and didn't end until the Middle East war and oil embargo of 1973-74.

But this one has been quite neat: the "Noughties" began with the Islamist terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, and they ended with a global financial meltdown in the past year.

The terrorist threat to the West was minor, but the West's hugely disproportionate and ill-considered response was a key factor in the great shift that defines the decade. The War on Terror, the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq, and all the rest got the detour a Muslim Nigerian student from trying to blow up an airliner over Detroit. It motivated him to do so.

But it also accelerated the rise of Asia and the relative decline of the West.

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■ GWYNNE DYER

Remembering the 'Noughties' as the decade the West lost its dominance

FROM PAGE 4

That shift was happening anyway. When China and India, with 40% of the world's population between them, are growing economically three to four times as fast as the major Western countries, it's only a matter of time until they catch up with the older industrial economies.

Back in 2003, however, the researchers at Goldman Sachs predicted that the Chinese economy would surpass that of the United States by the mid-2040s.

By the middle of this year, they were predicting that it would happen in the mid-2020s.

This year, for the first time, China built more cars than the United States. That acceleration is in large part a consequence of the huge diversion of Western attention and resources that was caused by the War on Terror.

Prestige is a quality that cannot be measured or quantified, but a reputation for competence in the use of power is a great asset in international affairs. After the centuries-old European empires wasted their wealth and the lives of tens of millions of their citizens in two world wars in only 30 years, their empires just melted away. Nobody was in awe of them any more, and they lacked the resources to hold onto their overseas possessions by force.

Something similar has happened over the past decade to the United States. Unwinnable wars were fought for the wrong reasons always hurt a great power's reputation, and wars fought amidst needless tax cuts, burgeoning deficits and financial anarchy are even more damaging to the country's power depends heavily on a global financial empire.

The United States spent the past decade cutting its own throat financially, ending with the near-death experience of the 2008-2009 finan-

cial meltdown. The Europeans made all the same mistakes, only more timidly, and the Japanese sat the decade out on the sidelines, mired in a seemingly endless recession.

There are two trends that could slow or even stop this shift. They seemed quite distant at the start of the decade, but now they look very big and frightening.

One is peak oil: the other is global warming. In Europe, North America and Japan, energy consumption is growing slowly and not at all, and it is relatively cheap and easy to reduce dependence on imported oil.

Just the fuel efficiency standards already mandated by the Obama administration could reduce American oil imports by half by 2020. Whereas Chinese and Indian dependence on imported oil is soaring. So is their use of coal.

That's unfortunate, because for purely geographical reasons these countries are far more vulnerable to high temperatures than the older industrial nations.

At even two degrees C (3.6 degrees F) higher average global temperature, they face floods, droughts and storms on a massive scale, probably accompanied by a steep fall in food production.

That sort of thing could abort even the Chinese and Indian economic miracles. So we're back to the old world where the future is uncertain. Of course. What else did you expect?

We can only observe the trends and try to remember that they are always contingent. But at the moment, it looks like the decade when the West finally lost its domination over the world's economy.

Gwynne Dyer's latest book, *Climate Wars*, is published in Canada by Random House and Vintage.

Ask the HEALTH EXPERT

DR. BRENDA WATSON, ND, CNC, CT

Will extra fibre help me lose weight?



Dieters are bombarded with messages about low-carb, high-protein and low-fat approaches to weight loss, but research suggests that they should also consider placing greater emphasis on fibre in their diet.

Research has shown that people who consume a diet high in fibre tend to excrete more calories in their stool. Technically, this is called fecal energy excretion and refers to the process by which fibre helps to block the absorption of calories consumed and leads to calories out of the body.

At the University of Wollongong, the Department of Human Nutrition and Food Science found that for every gram of fibre we eat, we eliminate 7 calories. This means that if you consume 35 grams of fibre each day you will eliminate 245 calories daily and that, roughly, 7,995 calories a month. Since each pound of fat is equal to 3,500 calories this works out to 2.1 lbs. each month or 26.04 pounds each year. That's pretty amazing!

There are 2 types of fibre, soluble and insoluble. Soluble fibre can be partially digested and may help to reduce the amount of cholesterol in the blood. Insoluble fibre is fibre that the body can't digest and so it passes through the gut helping other food and waste products move through the gut more easily. Insoluble fibre helps to keep bowels healthy and

stops constipation. Good sources of insoluble fibre are wholegrain bread, brown rice, wholegrain breakfast cereals and fruits and vegetables.

While consuming 35 grams of fibre per day may seem challenging, Renew Life has developed some tasty options that make it easy to count calories and fibre.

FIBRESMART shakes deliver 10 grams of fibre and 20 grams of protein per serving. They contain 14 essential vitamins and minerals and digestive enzymes to ensure proper breakdown of all the nutrients. FIBRESMART shakes have only 140 – 160 calories per serving and come in three flavours – Chocolate Creme, Old Fashion Vanilla, and Strawberry Dream.

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I'VE BEEN THINKING

It's time for new beginnings

MAHLON MARTIN
Portal Village Bible Chapel

January is the month of new things. We have a new year. We have new calendars. We have new resolutions.

But even though we have all these new things the old things are still with us. I've had very poor penmanship all my life. It seems to be a bad habit I've carried with me for many years and is now almost impossible to change.

Some people have the bad habit of always arriving late. I have also witnessed some sad results of overspending and gossip.

We all have a much more serious problem than a few bad habits. We all have a sinful nature.

David testified: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me." (Isaiah 51:5)

He is not suggesting his mother sinned when she conceived him — simply that both his parents were sinners by nature and he inherited their sinful nature.

It is this sinful nature that separates us from God and causes us to do sinful deeds. We do not become liars by lying, but rather

we lie because we were born with evil hearts.

"The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give every man according to his ways, According to the fruit of his doings." (Jeremiah 17:9-10)

Our heart is so evil that God doesn't even bother changing it. He simply gives us a new nature when we get saved. So that means all Christians have two natures. We have the old nature that desires evil things. We have the new nature that desires things that are good.

We must feed the new nature with the bible, prayer and Christian fellowship to be victorious.

We are exhorted to suppress the old nature.

"... Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, in which you yourselves once walked when you lived in them. But now you yourselves are to put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth.

"Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him." (Colossians 3:5-10)

This evil and sinful nature will be with us until the day we die. We can do much to suppress our old nature by controlling our thoughts. We can't keep evil thoughts from entering our mind but we must never entertain them. It's been said that you can't keep birds from flying over your head but you don't let them build nests in your hair. It goes without saying that what you read and what you watch on TV is extremely important. We even need to watch our conversation.

"Indeed, we put bits in horses' mouths that they may obey us, and we turn their whole body. Look also at ships: although they are so large and are driven by fierce winds, they are turned by a very small rudder wherever the pilot desires. Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles!"

"And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our mem-

bers that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

"With it we bless our God and father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so." (James 3:3-10)

The greatest need any person has is to experience a new birth. John 3 tells us we must be born into God's family, just like we were born into our earthly family. We had no choice in our human birth. This is an inescapable decision one must make if they want to go to heaven. To ignore it is choosing God's wrath and judgment for eternity.

The best way to enter this new year is by praying to God and asking to have mercy on your soul. Tell him you will receive Jesus as your personal lord and saviour.

"He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." (1 John 5:12)

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■ **FUNDRAISING:** Toughest time in 45-year history

United Way struggles to meet community needs

MAGGIE RIOPELLE
InPort News Staff

WELLAND — United Way of South Niagara has only met half of its fundraising target — and time is running out.

By the end February, the organization needs to know how much money is in the bank in order to decide what agencies get what piece of the limited pie.

Right now, the United Way has raised about \$500,000 for the 2009 campaign which would have typically concluded in December. No end date has been set.

"We know times are tough," said executive director Peter Papp. "I am concerned but I want to be as optimistic as possible. Normally, by this time we are at 60% to 70% of our goal."

"It is as we predicted ... the toughest year we've had in our 45-year history."

The United Way knew the challenge facing its 2009 campaign — it can no longer rely on corporate payroll deductions and now has to depend on personal contributions.

With large campaign supporters including John Deere closing up shop, the United Way has made appeals to small- and medium-sized businesses, and individuals in hopes of meeting its more than \$1 million target.

"It's a year of change ... from a payroll base to a personalized ask-type of approach for our campaign," Papp said.

Asked if the United Way campaign has had a high enough profile and whether people are getting the mes-

sage about the need for support, Papp said the message is getting out there. People who have never helped in the past or donated, are coming on board and "rallying together."

"The message to the community is you have to help us out here. People are getting the message but are making selective choices with where they give their philanthropic dollars."

The United Way, he said, isn't the organization that will feel the pinch — it's the agencies for which it raises these dollars that might not get the funding to continue to provide services to those most in need in the community.

There are 29 funding requests for the 2009 campaign dollars, so the requests and dollar amounts being requested are lower than in the past, he said.

Funding requests have been "realistic" and the agencies are aware of the funding challenges. The United Way last year supported more than 36 programs provided by 26 agencies.

"We've tried as hard as we can," said Papp, but while adding the United Way hasn't thrown in the towel yet.

In the coming weeks, the campaign committee is going to be knocking on more doors.

Also in an effort to raise more dollars, a number of new fundraisers are being pulled together over the next two months.

According to Papp, they want the new fundraisers to be creative and have as much of an impact as possible,

"so we can maximize the dollars, ensure it's fun and people feel comfortable," he said.

Those new fundraisers could be built upon for the 2010 campaign. Among the new fundraisers is a raffle for a Niagara Ultimate 5-Star Experience — dinner, hotel accommodations, limo ride, helicopter ride and a VP wine tour package.

Another concept being worked on is a fun mini casino night, he said.

Businesses that don't typically host fundraisers in support of the agency are jumping on board to assist, said Papp. As part of Port Colborne's Sportsfest, Canalside Pub is hosting a celebrity bartender event on Saturday, Feb. 6, with some yet-to-be-announced sports figures.

As well, M.T. Bellies is planning to resurrect its Niagara Big Eaters Competition that will have competitors chewing down on a big burger. The event begins Tuesday, Jan. 26. People can register online at mibellies.com or pick up a form at the restaurant. The entry fee is \$50 with chances to win \$500 in cash and \$500 worth of prizes.

Recognizing the fact that there will be more challenges ahead, Papp said the United Way hasn't officially wrapped up 2009's campaign yet but is gearing up for 2010.

"Does our approach need to be retooled? Absolutely. We will finish off as best we can and ramp up for 2010."

For information on how to help, call the United Way at 905-735-9490, e-mail office@southniagara.unitedway.ca or visit www.UnitedWaySouthNiagara.ca.



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■ **FUNDRAISING:** More canvassers needed for January March of Dimes month

Campaign marches into local neighbourhoods

KAESHA FORAND
InPort News Staff

The March of Dimes is making its way to a neighbourhood near you.

January is March of Dimes month and the Welland and Port Colborne campaign is underway with the hopes of raising \$3,000. The door-to-door campaign supports assistive devices program to individuals with disabilities.

Ruth Kapelus, public relations co-ordinator said last year Port Colborne and Welland residents raised \$3,500, and just over \$600,000 was raised across Ontario. This year's goal in Ontario is \$1 million.

Jocelyne Gagne, associate director of community relations for the March of Dimes' Thorold office, said there is always a need for more canvassers in Welland and Port Colborne, and 33 additional canvass-

ers are needed to bring their numbers up to 80.

Canvassers began making the rounds of their neighbourhoods on Jan. 1. They have been given an identification badge and will issue official tax receipts immediately.

Gagne said because of the increasing snow falls, some canvassers might wait until the beginning of February for better weather, while others are turning to technology.

Their online campaign is also bringing funds in through the website www.doortodooronline.ca.

"It's the second year for the online campaign, and we're really encouraging people," she said of spreading the word through e-mail, although Gagne believes the physical presence of a door-to-door canvasser is more effective.

Every dollar raised has a great impact in the community. Last year, every dollar was matched with four extra dollars which allowed \$20,000 in equipment to be purchased for Welland and Port Colborne residents.

The fundraised money is matched by accessing service clubs, disability groups, the government and insurance companies to name a few.

It's the second year for the online campaign and we're really encouraging people.

Jocelyne Gagne, March of Dimes associate director of community relations

Get involved

- Interested in canvassing? Contact Kim Vaughn at 905-945-1301.
- To make an online donation, visit www.doortodooronline.ca.

Any support we can get is most appreciated.

Jocelyne Gagne, March of Dimes

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■ **HEALTH CARE:** New plan provides guidelines for the future

LHIN introduces clinical services plan

KAESHA FORAND
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE—A new clinical services plan by the LHIN will help guide how health care is provided in its coverage area during the next three years.

Dr. Jennifer Everson, physician lead for the Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network, presented the plan during last Thursday night's South Niagara Health Care Corp. meeting.

The plan provides clear guidelines to achieve interprofessional care, clinical program integration and community-based health services.

She said the plan was created by using feedback from 18 planning advisory groups—with leaders from clinical, community and academic areas such as cardiac, endocrine, geriatric, mental health and addiction.

"We asked them a question: Not what do you want in the next five to 10 years, but what do your patients want in the next five to 10 years. Then the clinical services plan was born."

The plan highlights a number of issues with the area the LHIN serves, including low screening rates, high environmental exposure, high rates of asthma, smoking and alcohol and drug abuse.

Through consultation, authors of the

We asked them a question: Not what do you want in the next five to 10 years, what do your patients want in the next five to 10 years. Then the clinical services plan was born.

Dr. Jennifer Everson, Hamilton Niagara Haldimand Brant Local Health Integration Network

plan discovered lifestyle, social circumstances, genetic disposition, health care and environmental factors all affect a person's health.

They also learned residents want care close to home, a family doctor, timely access to care, to tell their health story once instead of having to repeat it, services and support that are easy to find, access to publicly funded alternative care such as naturopathy and chiropractic services.

"We need to make sure there are appropriate facilities close to home to help with these preventive techniques," she said.

"Believe me, every province is facing what we are."

The plan not only focuses on health care. It also incorporates keeping children healthy and active with nutrition and physical activity, as well as keeping seniors in their homes longer and keeping them safe.

Creating a transportation network is also included in the preventative plan since patients must often travel between municipalities. It notes that seniors must have the ability to go to their appointments.

A large aspect of the SCP includes the creation of e-health—an online program linking hospitals, doctors, pharmacies, family health teams and other health care providers.

The program would reduce the need to

repeat diagnostic tests resulting in quicker, more effective care, improve communication between local and regional hospitals, physicians and health care providers reducing the need to repeat health information; provide information to make informed decisions; and make it easier for health-care providers to collaborate.

Everson said the system would transfer information electronically so an emergency room doctor could access a patient's records and know their past history, and prescriptions.

It would be a "very clear system" which would also include a regional diagnostic image repository to store data.

She said although Queen's Park has been plagued by an expensive e-health debate, the LHIN has carefully planned this project.

Health-care providers would utilize a Clinical Connect system to tap into the e-health system.

"There is a lot of work being put in place."

It would also allow patients to access their information online, Everson said.

The 38-page plan is available at www.portcolborne.com by clicking on the South Niagara Health Care Corp. link on the left side. The document includes a three-year timeline and a detailed list of priorities.

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■ alongthelakeshore

Jan. 15: The Wainfleet Fall Fair is in need of volunteers to help keep the fair going. The fair board is looking for adults and children from 12 to 18 years of age to assist with committees. Contact wainfleet.fair@gmail.com or attend the group's annual meeting at 7:30 p.m. at Forks United Church.

Jan. 21: The Port Colborne Horticultural Society will be holding its monthly meeting at the Senior's Centre. Special guest Yvon Doucet will be speaking about orchids. Light refreshments will be available. Bring a friend.

Ongoing:
• Kids zone for children ages six to 12 run every Monday and Friday from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Centre for Community Living, 100 McEwen Ave. \$5 registration fee. Free transportation available. Call 905-835-8941 ext. 135. Events are supervised by adults.

• Teen zone for youth ages 13 to 18 every Wednesday from 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Reach Out Centre, 60 Nickel St. \$5 registration fee. Free transportation available. Call 905-835-8941 ext. 135. Adult supervised events are held in cooperation with Community Living Port Colborne-Wainfleet and Port Carnes. Enjoy games, trips to the YMCA, cooking, crafts, music, etc.

63985007

■ **PEOPLE, PLACES:** Embracing the beauty of the season

Winter magic awaits at Morgan's Point



George Duma
BY GEORGE

When I tell people January and February are two of my very favourite months of the year, they look at me like I'm from another planet.

It's true, though.

After the summer, when fall arrives unofficially after Labour Day weekend, it seems like society decides the holiday is over and it's time to get back to work. And get back to work we do.

We go flat out until the end of October, when Halloween arrives. Almost the day after Halloween, the unofficial Christmas season kicks off, when merchandisers start sending out their sale messages.

It's mind-boggling, really, an assault on the senses. Everywhere we turn, Christmas in the first week of November is upon us. Oh, we still have work to do through November and into December, but Christmas is now upon us. Everywhere we turn tells us so.

I really don't mind because for many, November is somewhat of a dreary month and if the anticipation of Christmas helps folks get through it, so much the better.

It's just that, I love the Christmas season and everything that goes with it, but outside of the crass commercialism. Never did have a stomach for that. Never will.

As we lead up to Christmas, there is a joyful anticipation of many things. For me, it's the gathering of family, of spending time with family I don't see anywhere nearly enough the rest of the year.

It's the spirit in the air, the feeling of gladness that overtakes so many for so many varied reasons.

It's how nice some people suddenly get. Why do they wait for the Christmas season before showing their true, delightful colours? Why do they hide their wonderful traits or, worse still, perhaps forget they

possess them during the other months of the year?

These "glad tidings" go on for weeks leading up to Christ's birthday and into the new year and then, suddenly, grind to a halt. Or so it seems, anyway. But they don't have to.

It's why January and February are two of my very favourite months.

I find this a time for reflection, a time when winter's beauty is at its height and should be taken advantage of. And it's so easy to do. You don't have to leave south Niagara to enjoy.

My favourite spot in the entire area, for any season, is Morgan's Point. There is something magical about it that I just can't put my finger on. In the spring, the abundance of trees signifies the season with the buds that are so prevalent.

The summer is a time to go and hike, appreciate the dunes and the boardwalks that run through them, and of course appreciate walks along the beach on the lake.

Fall brings with it all the incredible colours that can take the breath away. The lake is a bit rougher, the waves slash a little louder and it is indeed getting cooler.

But it's now that, perhaps, I love Morgan's Point the most. It's certainly the time of year when, arguably, it is at its purest. For, when you get there after a snowfall, more often than not the snow hasn't been broken. You have to find a safe parking spot out on the road, and then venture in, dressed in layers and with tall boots.

And it's wonderful when you find people who have actually broken the snow, who do appreciate the Morgan's Point winter magic.

On Saturday, I met three such folks.

Terry Loibl brought his kids, Nicholas and Kaylyn, to enjoy the soft slopes at Morgan's Point and to get away from the crowds at other more popular local snowboard/sleigh runs like H.H. Knoll Park. They live on the lake between Golf Course Road and Rathfon Road.

"Normally it's cold enough by now that



GEORGE DUMA/InPort News Photo

Kaylyn Loibl, foreground and her brother Nicholas enjoy the hills at Morgan's Point as they try out new Christmas presents while dad Terry watches from above.

the lake is frozen so we skate there in the winter, but that hasn't happened yet this year," Terry says.

I have a standing invitation to visit when the lake finally does freeze.

"It's really something. Come out and take some pictures. You go out a bit and there's this area the size of a football field and it's surrounded by ice hills. It's like a protected bowl."

Sounds wonderful. But until then, there's always Morgan's

Point, a place that has such a distinct, amazing beauty no matter what the season.

See you there?

George Duma is a resident of Port Colborne and has spent 30 years in the newspaper business. He is currently a member of the Journalism faculty at Niagara College. He welcomes comments and column suggestions and can be reached at gduma@cgccog.ca.

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■ sportsbrief

CT WHALERS DOWN DAVIDSON'S FUNERAL HOME RAPTORS IN ATOM BASKETBALL

This week's atom basketball game saw CT Whalers down the Davidson Funeral Home Raptors 40-23.

Mike Benson and Ethan Scott joined in 14 and 12 each for the Whalers. Baxter Pearson, Jonathan Gamble and Danielle Rock each chipped in with four points. Katie Symonds added one bucket. Matt Traynor led the Raptors with nine points. Katrina Arcand had six. Zoey Kos-

tal-Nicholson and Amanda Lalouet had two points each. In other league action, Jared Thalen had a game high 28 points to lead the Knights of Columbus Lakers to a 58-48 victory over the Shea's Service Center Grizzlies. Tessa Sherk had 10 points with Max Gelka adding eight. Danielle Bloudeau and Noah Chevrette chipped in with two buckets for the Lakers. Steve Wilcox and Victoria Joyce completed the scoring with two points each. Michael Pomieski and Dylan Balogh paced the Grizzlies with a combined 34 points. Sydney Garon added 10 points. Autumn-Rae Bily and Joshua Quadd one bucket to complete the Grizzly scoring.

—InPort News staff

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■ **FISHERIES:** Conservation club warns about invasive species

Asian carp expected to spread through Great Lakes

FROM PAGE 13

Species such as the zebra mussel and the round goby have "balanced out" over time. It is what happens in the interim that troubles Marinelli.

"It's the same old story," Marinelli said. "I don't see (the Asian carp) being stopped. Some way, they are always going to get through."

Dave Malloy, of Erie Tracker Outfitters in Port Colborne, said the Asian carp has had a serious impact on lakes in Illinois.

"They are destroying everything," Malloy said. "It's scary."

Malloy said the Asian carp has no value commercially or to the sport angling community. They grow quickly and are "bottom feeders." These combined factors could have dire consequences for perch and walleye habitat in Lake Erie should the Asian carp find its way into the ecosystem.

Malloy also believes there is not enough regulation and enforcement to prevent the introduction of invasive species by ships sailing the Great Lakes.

"We're not the culprits," he said.

"It's the freighters flushing their ballast. The sport fishers have to pay the price. I'd

like to see the government clamp down on those guys."

One of Malloy's concerns is the potential harm Asian carp can do to the perch and walleye populations in Lake Erie. Malloy said the perch population in Erie has increased significantly in recent years. He said that has helped to compensate for a few "poor hatches" on the walleye populations.

"We have just got something good going here," he said.

Malloy also believes the Great Lakes have an ability to adjust to some new species.

"Zebra mussels were going to be the end of the lake," he said.

"The lake is full of gobys, but every fish has learned to eat them. The lake has been able to adapt, so far."

Malloy agrees there is a lot at stake when it comes to the Great Lakes fisheries. The Ontario government estimates 1.4 million anglers fish in the province each year, spending more than \$2.3 billion dollars on fisheries-related expenditures.

The commercial fishery in the Great Lakes is annually valued at about \$200 million.

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■ NIAGARA HEALTH SYSTEM

Funding shortfall won't impact hospital, says CFO

FROM PAGE 19

When that's done, she said the NHS will work with the LHIN and province to determine "what that [funding] gap is."

Zangari said none of the health system's funding shortfalls will have an impact on building the new hospital. "The new hospital is a self-contained financed project. Regardless of our operating position, regardless of the fact that we have a deficit, it will not impact on the new hospital," she said.

Another part of the document Schofield found troubling was a reference to the health system's mitigation strategies.

It says the hospital improvement plan will create "limited savings," and the health system would "require significant capital funds to implement the restructuring plan," and that the LHIN does not have the resources to address the health system's financial situation.

"They're saying the hospital improvement plan is not really going to save that much and yet we need a lot of money to implement it," Schofield said. "Do they realize what they said?"

Zangari said she was aware the report said the hospital improvement plan would produce limited savings, however she disagrees with Schofield. That plan, Zangari said, will save the health system \$28 million over its five-year implementation period. It has already cut its budget by \$9 million to \$10 million by closing 30 beds.

Badawey said the LHIN report is one of several troubling pieces of information that are coming to light and it's time the provincial government steps in to address them.

"The NHS has dug a hole. It cannot get out of without the intervention of the Ministry (of Health) and, quite frankly, all eyes are on the ministry now and the premier."

Kormos isn't holding his breath waiting for the provincial government to step in.

"Obviously the province should be concerned, but since the province is the one for whom the LHIN is a front, and the province is the one who's underfunding the NHS, and the province is the one that's implicitly approving the opening of emergency rooms, one suspects that it's quite happy to see the NHS raid the capital budget," Kormos said.

"And who's going to be left holding the bag? It's going to be the residents of Niagara who are going to be called on to give that much more by way of charitable contributions, from families whose workers have just lost their jobs."

Another issue Badawey remained concerned about was "enablers" that were to be put in place prior to the implementation of the hospital improvement plan, but weren't.

It makes him wonder if those enablers will ever be put in place, to address such issues as emergency room gridlock, renovations to the Port Colborne hospital urgent care centre, emergency medical services improvements, and improved services for alternate level of care patients and seniors.

Unless those issues are addressed, he said it will have an impact throughout the region — not just in Port Colborne.

"What's surfacing now are the challenges that are happening throughout all of the jurisdictions of Niagara because of the bad decisions that have come out from the HUP," he said. "It's clear that the gridlock that has come out across the Niagara region is not going to get any better."

Zangari said any outstanding enablers — including renovations at Port Colborne's critical care unit, which is currently awaiting final ministry approval — will be addressed.

In addition, she said renovations will be carried out at other sites, such as upgrades to operating rooms in Niagara Falls.

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